

REMARKS

Claims 14-26 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) based on applicants' claim of priority, which is now supported by the verified translation submitted herewith.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 14-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dixon et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,677,338) in view of Fukuyo et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,580,200). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Fukuyo reference relied upon by the Examiner corresponds to a Japanese parent that was filed two months after applicants filed their priority application in this case. Therefore, based on the enclosed verified translation and a Declaration stating that the translation is true for Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-100669, it is respectfully submitted that the Fukuyo reference is not prior art and cannot be used to maintain the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the

Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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